

“Мы есть русские” – A Civic-Patriotic Movement in Contemporary Russia

Introduction: The Birth of a New Movement

The phrase “[Мы есть русские](#)” translates to "We Are Russians"—a bold declaration of identity, unity, and purpose. It is more than a slogan; it is the name of a civic-patriotic movement founded in April 2024, in the Russian Federation. Positioned as a cultural and ideological response to growing Russophobia worldwide, this movement calls for national consolidation across ethnic lines under a shared Russian civilizational identity.



Launched with support from the political party A Just Russia – For Truth and its leader Sergey Mironov, the movement aspires to become a platform for all those who "feel Russian in spirit," including ethnic minorities, Russian-speaking diasporas, and historically rooted communities across Eurasia and beyond.

Linguistic and Cultural Framing: The Power of Language

The movement's name, “Мы есть русские,” immediately attracted attention. In standard Russian grammar, the verb "есть" (is/are) is often omitted in present-tense constructions. The phrase would normally be "Мы русские." The insertion of "есть" is a deliberate linguistic move that serves a few key purposes:

Emphasis – It reinforces identity in an assertive tone, suggesting, “We indeed are Russians.”

Universality – It mirrors English phrasing to reach global audiences, especially the Russian diaspora.

Philosophical Weight – The unusual grammatical form signals philosophical and ideological intent—asserting not just presence, but existential belonging.

Founding and Organizational Structure

The movement was officially launched on April 11, 2024, at the Vernadsky State Geological Museum in Moscow. Its founding conference drew civic activists, veterans, educators, clergy, and cultural leaders from across the Russian Federation.



While Sergey Mironov played a significant role in its creation, the official leadership includes Svetlana Kuznetsova, a senior member of A Just Russia – For Truth. Organizationally, the movement consists of a federal coordinating council, thematic committees (e.g., culture, education, repatriation), and growing regional branches, including key strongholds in Crimea, Kaliningrad, and the Russian Far East.

Ideology: The Civilizational Russian

At the heart of the movement lies a broad reinterpretation of what it means to be “Russian.” Instead of equating Russianness strictly with ethnic Russian heritage, the movement promotes a civilizational identity—any person who shares Russian cultural, historical, spiritual, and linguistic values may self-identify as Russian.

Key Ideological Tenets:

Multipolarity – Rejection of Western-centric globalization and the promotion of a sovereign, multipolar world order.

Traditional Values – Family, faith (Orthodoxy as a spiritual base), patriotism, and continuity with Russia’s historical legacy.

Anti-Colonialism – Positioning Russia as a protector of national sovereignties in opposition to neocolonial practices.

Russophobia Awareness – Fighting against anti-Russian discrimination in international institutions, media, and law.

Strategic Objectives and Programs

The movement pursues five major programmatic directions:

1. Countering Russophobia

Launching educational campaigns and international forums.

Monitoring hate crimes and legal abuses against Russians abroad.

Proposing laws in Russia to penalize Russophobic content or actions.

2. Support for the Russian Diaspora

Legal aid and diplomatic support for ethnic Russians facing repression in countries like Latvia, Estonia, or Ukraine.

Assistance with repatriation programs for families choosing to return to Russia.

Partnering with Russian embassies and cultural centers worldwide.

3. Cultural Sovereignty and Media

Producing documentaries and hosting cultural festivals (e.g., the 2026 documentary film titled “Мы есть русские”).

Supporting Orthodox Christian schools, Slavic folk music events, and preservation of native languages in minority regions.

Promoting Russian-language media platforms abroad.

4. Youth and Education

Organizing patriotic contests in schools, such as drawing or essay competitions.

Establishing youth brigades and historical reenactment groups.

Integrating movement ideas into civic and historical education curriculums.

5. Veteran and Humanitarian Support

Providing aid to veterans of the Special Military Operation (SMO).

Hosting job fairs and psychological support groups for returning soldiers.

Supporting war-affected families in Donbas and other newly integrated territories.

Regional Branches and Community Engagement

From Kaliningrad to Vladivostok, the movement is creating localized chapters. These regional offices hold public lectures, distribute literature, and work with municipal governments to promote their goals.



Notable Regional Actions:

Crimea: "[Мы есть русские](#)" helped organize a festival celebrating the region's "return to the Russian world."

Kaliningrad: School contests on Russian military history attracted hundreds of youth participants.

Perm: Civic dialogues and Orthodox holiday events co-hosted with religious institutions.

Symbols and Media Presence

The movement uses traditional Russian iconography combined with modern civic branding:

Medals and Awards: Honorary medals for cultural or patriotic service.

Publications: The website werussians.ru features event updates, analytical articles, and educational resources.

Social Media: Active use of VKontakte, Telegram, and YouTube to reach younger demographics and the global Russian diaspora.

Criticisms and Controversies

Despite its civic claims, "Мы есть русские" has not been free of scrutiny.

Linguistic Criticism:

Language experts have noted the grammatical oddity of the phrase "Мы есть русские," viewing it as unnecessary and artificial.

Political Criticism:

Some commentators argue the movement is a vehicle for A Just Russia – For Truth to broaden its voter base among conservatives and nationalists.

Concerns of Nationalism:

While officially inclusive, some fear the movement may embolden ultra-nationalist factions or alienate non-Russian ethnic groups within the Federation.

Philosophical Underpinnings

The movement's worldview is influenced by several schools of Russian political philosophy:

Eurasianism – Advocating for a distinct Russian-led cultural and political bloc apart from the West.

Neo-Slavophilism – Reviving 19th-century ideas of Orthodox, communal, and imperial Russian traditions.

Conservative Populism – Championing the "common Russian person" against both liberal elites and foreign ideologies.

The Road Ahead: Movement or Mission?

As the movement continues to grow in institutional power and public recognition, key questions remain:

Will it become a permanent civil society structure?

Can it remain inclusive while promoting strong national identity?

How will it influence domestic policy, education, and foreign diplomacy?

[“Мы есть русские”](#) is a movement rooted in identity, born from perceived crisis, and striving to redefine what it means to belong to the Russian world. Whether viewed as a cultural renaissance or a strategic political project, its influence is unmistakable. It represents an ongoing effort to galvanize Russian society around a common civilizational narrative, one that is distinctly sovereign, morally anchored, and proud of its historical legacy.